

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

CINCPAC

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 PEKING 00366

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA 5)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, MILI, CH

SUBJECT: CONDITIONS IN WUHAN AND ALONG CANTON-WUHAN RAIL LINE

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

1. USLO DC HOLDRIDGE AND WIFE WERE IN WUAHN FROM FEB 24 TO FEB 26 EN ROUTE FROM CANTON TO PEKING BY RAIL, AND DURING STAY VISITED WUHAN UNIVERSITY, A MIDDLE SCHOOL, YANGTZE BRIDGE, AND COMMUNE IN EASTERN SUBURBS OF CITY. HOLDRIDGES ALSO ATTENDED SPECIAL PRESENTATION BY WUHAN STUDENT ACROBATIC TROUPE STAGED FOR WORKERS-PEASANTS- SOLDIERS AND VISITED PROVINCIAL MUSEUM. REQUEST FOR VISITS TO FACTORIES TURNED DOWN ON GROUNDS THAT PRODUCTION JUST BEING RESUMED AGAIN AFTER SPRING FESTIVAL HIATUS AND WORKERS ALSO ENGAGED IN SPECIAL CAMPAIGN OF POLITICAL STUDY. MAJOR IMPRESSIONS FOLLOW.

2. GENERAL. WUHAN IS DRAB CITY, AND WHILE MAJOR ARTERIES ARE LINED WITH NEWER HIGH-RISE OFFICE BUILDINGS AND FLATS, BEHIND THIS FACADE MUCH OF HOUSING CONSISTS OF PRE-1949 CHINESE-TYPE STRUCTURES IN
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DELAPIDATED CONDITION. FOREIGN-BUILT BUILDINGS IN FORMER CONCESSION

AREAROF HANKOW STILL VERY MUCH IN USE BECAUSE NOTHING HAS BEEN BUILT TO REPLACE THEM. HOWEVER, PEOPLE FOR MOST PART WELL-DRESSED AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITY SEEMINGLY PROCEEDING AT BRISK PACE. MOTOR VEHICLE TRAFFIC HEAVY, WITH MORE TRUCKS BUT FEWER AUTOMOBILES THAN IN PEKING. PUBLIC BUS TRANSPORTATION DID NOT APPEAR TO BE UP TO PEKING STANDARDS.

3. POLITICAL. EVIDENCES OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY SEEN EVERYWHERE. WALLS WERE SMEARED WITH SLOGANS ATTACKING -- AND SOMETIMES DEFENDING -- LEADING PERSONALITIES OF HUPEI PROVINCIAL AND WUHAN MUNICIPAL PARTY COMMITTEES. SLOGANS NOTED: "TO ATTACK TS'ENG SSU-YU IS TO GIVE DIE-HARD SUPPORT TO LIU FENG;" "THE PARTY CENTER WANTS UNITY, LIU FENG WANTS DISORDER;" "ELECTION OF HSIANG CHIN-LIU AS A DELEGATE TO THE 4TH NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS IS A VICTORY FOR MAO TSE-TUNG'S REVOLUTIONARY POLITICAL LINE." PERSONS ATTACKED BY NAME IN ADDITION TO FOREGOING WERE CHU HUNG-HSIA, AND CHAO HSIN-CH'U, AND GENERAL ATTACKS WERE DIRECTED AGAINST ENTIRE PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL COMMITTEES FOR "OPPRESSING THE PETALE." ONE ORGANIZATION WHICH HAD ORIGINATED ATTACKS CALLED ITSELF "662 WORKERS' GROUP."

4. HOWEVER, INDICATING THAT MOST INTENSIVE PHASE OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY MAY HAVE PASSED, MANY SLOGANS OVERPAINTED WITH EXHORTATIONS TO "CARRY P'I-LIN P'I-KUNG CAMPAIGN THROUGH TO THE END" AND "WARMLY WELCOME VICTORIOUS CONVENING OF 4TH NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS" EVIDENT ALSO THAT MANY LARGE-CHARACTER POSTERS HAD BEEN TORN DOWN, AND THOSE REMAINING (OSTLY ON BULLETIN BOARDS OUTSIDE ENTRANCES TO ENTERPRISES) APPEARED TO DEAL WITH RECENTLY OPENED CAMPAIGN TO STUDY MAO'S INSTRUCTIONS ON DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT. ON ONE WALK THROUGH RESIDENTIAL AREA OF CITY, ANNOUNCEMENTS WERE OBSERVED POSTED ON EVERY RESIDENTIAL BLOCK CALLING ATTENTION TO THIS CAMPAIGN. CHINA INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL SERVICE GUIDE SAID THAT WORKERS, PEASANTS, AND SOLDIERS THROUGHOUT WUHAN AREA NOW ENGAGED IN LARGE-SCALE STUDY OF MAO'S INSTRUCTIONS, AND IN FACT ON EARLY MORNING OF FEB 26 LARGE GROUPS OF PEOPLE WERE OBSERVED MARCHING OFF WITH CHAIRS AND NOTEBOOKS TO WHAT PROBABLY WAS POLITICAL STUDY. AT MIDDLE SCHOOL VISITED, ENTIRE FIRST DAY OF NEW TEPUBEING TAKEN UP WITH POLITICAL STUDY. COMMUNE VISITED (SEE BELOW) ALSO ENGAGED IN STUDY CAMPAIGN. IMPRESSION CREATED BY ALL THIS THAT WHATEVER MAY HAVE BEEN GOING ON IN WUHAN BEFORE, NEW DICTATORSHIP

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OF THE PROLETARIAT CAMPAIGN HAS PUT A DAMPER ON IT.

5. CURIOUS SIDELIGHT OF MORE CONTEMPORARY SLOGANS WAS WORDING OF ONE NEAR HEADQUARTERS OF WUHAN MUNICIPAL PARTY COMMITTEE READING "PROTECT (YUNG HU) THE ELECTION OF TENG HSIAO-P'ING AS VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE CCP CENTRAL COMMITTEE." THIS PHRASEOLOGY SUGGESTS THAT THERE MAY BE THOSE IN WUHAN WHO WERE NOT TOO HAPPY AT TENG'S ELEVATION.

6. ANOTHER BIT OF POLITICAL MISCELLANIA NOTED AT YUEYANG SOUTH OF CHANGSHA ON RAIL LINE, WHERE CHIEF OF RAILWAY STATION PUBLIC SECURITY UNIT WAS ATTACKED AS "CLASS ENEMY" FOR HAVING "VIELY STRUCK" AN ENGINE DRIVERS. STATION MANAGER ALSO ATTACKED ON SIMILAR CHARGE. ATTACKS APPEAR TO BEAR OUT REPORTS OF TENSIONS BETWEEN RAILWAY WORKERS AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES.

7. MILITARY. PLA OMNIPRESENT IN WUAHN, WITH ALL THREE SERVICES REPRESENTED. HAN AND YANGTZE BRIDGES WERE HEAVILY GUARDED BY SOLDIERS CARRYING AK-47'S. DURING APPROXIMATELY 15-MILE DRIVE EAST OF WUHAN TO HUA SHAN COMMUNE MANY DIFFERENT PLA INSTALLATIONS PASSED, WITH PLA AIRFORCE PREDOMINATING. RADAR INSTALLATION NOTED ON HILLTOP JUST EAST OF EAST LAKE CONSISTING OF ACQUISITION TYPE SIMILAR TO SOVIET P-15M MOUNTED ON TOP OF HIGH (8-10 METER) TOWER; WITH IT WAS UNIT SIMILAR TO SOVIET BAR LOCK P-35 TYPE BUT MOUNTED ON PEDESTAL RATHER THAN ON VAN AND HAVING SQUARED CORNERS. ABOVE FIVE MILES FARTHER ALONG, ROAD PASSED 10-GUN BATTERY OF SOVIET-TYPE 100MM. ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS AND A 5-GUN BATTERY WAS LOCATED WITHIN AREA BELONGING TO HUA SHAN COMMUNE. THESE WERE BOTH PERMANENT INSTALLATIONS SINCE BRICK BARRACKS AND SUPPORT BUILDINGS WERE LOCATED CLOSE BY. ANOTHER CONCENTRATION OF BRICK BUILDINGS OCCUPIED BY PLA AIRFORCE WAS OBSERVED ABOUT MIDWAY BETWEEN COMMUNE AND EAST LAKE BUT WITH NO WEAPONS VISIBLE. HOWEVER, JEEP ROAD AND PATHS LED UP TO TOP OF HILL IMMEDIATELY BEHIND THIS INSTALLATION, SUGGESTING POSSIBLE MISSILE SITE.

8. TESTIFYING TO THE UBIQUITOUSNESS OF PLA IN WUHAN, PLA PREDOMINATED AT EVENING PERFORMANCE OF ACROBATIC TROUPE MENTIONED ABOVE, WITH WHAT FEW WORKERS AND PEASANTS WERE PRESENT RELEGATED TO BACK ROWS OF BALCONY. INTERESTING SIDELIGHT OF THIS AFFAIR WAS PRESENCE OF NUMEROUS PERSMN EL WHO BY THEIR UNIFORM AND ROTUND SHAPE WERE OBVIOUSLY HIGH-RANKING CADRES; OF THESE, MORE CONFIDENTIAL

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THAN A FEW WERE ACCOMPANIED BY GROUP OF AIDES WHICH INCLUDED YOUNG, ATTRACTIVE PLA WAC'S. BUSH

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9. MILITIA CLEARLY QUITE ACTIVE IN WUHAN. GROUP OF YOUNG MILITIA MEN SEEN AT EAST LAKE PARK PROBABLY RESTING AFTER DRILL, WITH WEAPONS STACKED NEARBY. THESE CONSISTED OF SEMIAUTOMATIC CARBINES

(SKS) TYPE 56 AND SUBMACHINE GUNS TYPE 50. ON MORNING OF FEB 26 CONVOY

OF AT LEAST 12 37-MM ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS TOWED BY 1-1/2 TON TRUCKS WAS PARKED BY SIDE OF ROAD NEAR APPROACHES TO YANGTZE BRIDGE, WITH GUN CREWS CONSISTING ENTIRELY OF MILITIA, BOTH MEN AND WOMEN. TWO OR THREE UNIFORMED PLA WERE AT HEAD OF COLUMN IN JEEPS. OFFICIALS AT MIDDLE SCHOOL VISITED CONFIRMED THAT SCHOOL HAD MILITIA UNIT DRAWN FROM UPPER MIDDLE STUDENTS. WUHAN UNIVERSITY ALSO HAD MILITIA UNIT, ACCORDING TO DEPUTY HEAD OF REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE. FINALLY, HUA SHAN COMMUNE HAD MILITIA UNIT, AND TARGETS USED FOR SMALL ARMS SIGHTING WERE OBSERVED.

10. ONE STRANGE INCIDENT FOR WHICH NO EXPLANATION CAN BE GIVEN WAS SEEN: SMALL PROCESSION OF CHINESE DRESSED IN ORDINARY BUT RATHER SHABBY CLOTHING WAS NOTED MARCHING ALONG MAIN STREET IN HANKOW IN WHICH INDIVIDUALS APPEARED TO BE CARRYING BUNDLES OF PERSONAL CLOTHING; WHOLE AFFAIR WAS UNDER HEAVY GUARD BY PLA BEARING RIFLES
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SLUNG OVER SHOULDERS.

11. A SIGN NOTED IN CANTON OUTSIDE ENTERPRISE LOCATED ON STREET RUNNING INTO RAILROAD STATION READ: "WARMLY WELCOME THE WORKERS' MILITIA UNIT (SQUAD OR PLATOON) WHICH HAS BEEN SENT TO BE STATIONED ON OUR STREET."

12. ECONOMIC. AS MENTIONED ABOVE, WUHAN APPEARED TO BE BUSTLING. TRAFFIC ALONG ROADS AND ON RIVERS VERY HEAVY. MANY TRAINS DAILY CROSSED YANGTZE BRIDGE. REQUESTS WERE MADE TO VISIT IRON AND STEEL PLANT OR MACHINE TOOL FACTORY, BUT TURNED DOWN FOR REASONS STATED, SO IMPOSSIBLE TO JUDGE FACTORY CONDITIONS. HUA SHAN COMMUNE WELL
RUX
HS#

WITH WINTER CROP OF RAPESEEDS ABOUT TO BE HARVESTED AND LOOKING GOOD. SOME PLOWING OF FIELDS PREPARATORY TO PLANTING RICE, BUT MAJOR ACTIVITY SAID TO BEGIN AROUND MID-MARCH. AGRICULTURAL CONDITIONS GENERALLY GOOD. COMMUNE RAN SMALL MACHINERY PLANT AND ALSO HAD WORKSHOP TURNING OUT OBSTETRICAL INSTRUMENTS, INCLUDING CURETTES WHICH MAY HAVE BEEN USED FOR ABORTIONS. EACH OF EIGHT BRIGADES HAD SEVERAL TRACTORS AND ONE TRUCK. ALL MAJOR DAILY NEEDS OF COMMUNE MEMBERS AVAILABLE AT STORES IN MAIN VILLAGE.

13. CROPS IN VICINITY OF CANTON LOOKED EXCELLENT. WINTER WHEAT WAS NEARING HARVEST STAGE, AND FIELDS SEEMED TO BE IN FIRST-RATE CONDITION; PREPARATIONS WERE UNDERWAY FOR PLANTING FIRST RICE CROP. IN HUNAN AND HUPEI, PRINCIPAL CROP AGAIN WAS RAPESEED, AND AGAIN

CONDITIONS APPEARED EXCELLENT. LITTLE FARM MACHINERY OBSERVED, AND PLOWING WAS BEING CARRIED OUT FOR MOST PART BY WATER BUFFALOES.

BUSH

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